

The SL Arts and Life Magazine

reZ

m a r c h 2 0 1 4

The Singularity of Kumiko
Bryn Oh's Latest Installation by Jami Mills

Finn McCool
Gudrun Gausman

Mardi Gras
Harry Bailey

p m
o i
e c
t r
o f
i c
t i
o n

Back Dive Into the Depth
Art Blue

Key to Golden Hills: Angie
Stihly Augenblick and Hitomi Tamatzui



CONTENTS

- **The Key to Golden Hills - Chapter Two: Angie** Stihly Augenblick and Hitomi Tamatzui bring us the second exciting installment of their sizzling noir series
- **The Singularity of Kumiko** Jami Mills explores the newest art installation of one of SL's premier artists, Bryn Oh, who introduces us to that little snot, Mr. Zippers
- **The Artefact: Back Dive Into the Depth** Art Blue brings us another chapter of his digital fantasy about hospital escapes, Mondrian art, and virulent Alzheimer's
- **Our Fables Become Us** Poet Adrian Blair has brought us many heartfelt poems, but none more touching than this
- **Mardi Gras!** The Perfect Gentleman, Harry Bailey, takes us to the Big Easy for one of the wildest, most colorful of celebrations - Mardi Gras - and lives to tell the tale
- **Encyclopedia** That rascal Crap Mariner brings us another of his musings about glossaries, footnotes and almanacs
- **Finn McCool is Not a Sportsbar** Our very own Gudrun Gausman re-tells the story of one Fionn MacCumhail (Finn McCool), whose adventures run the proverbial gamut

About the Cover: Here's Mr. Zippers, from Bryn Oh's newest art installation, The Singularity of Kumiko. Bryn thrills and challenges audiences with themes of love, loss, corruption, and mortality, and scares one's pants off in the process.





**Start Up
Commercial Grid
ready for beta testers**

Virtual World *City*

Check it out and give feedback. . .

Real Life Cities

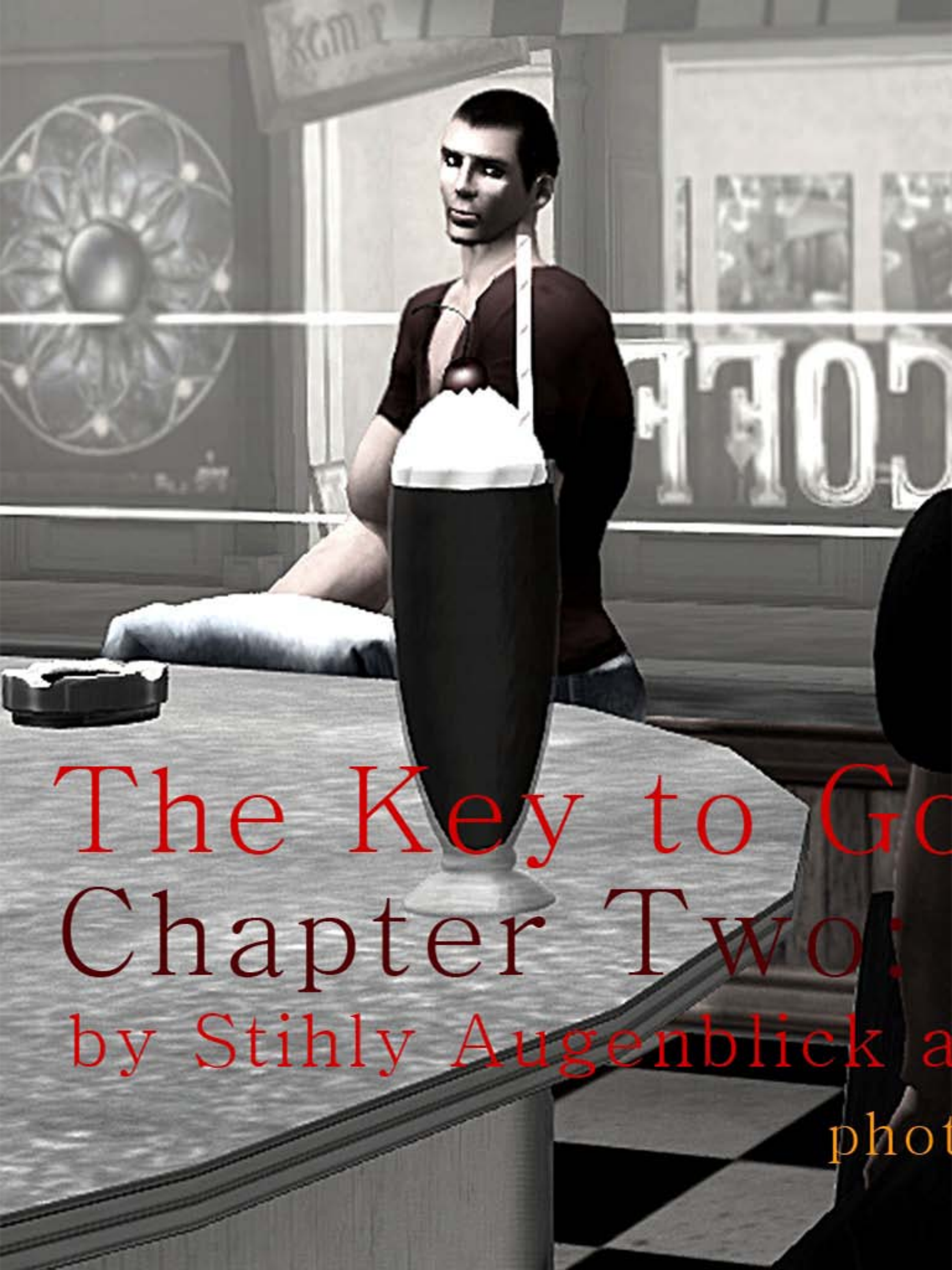
Fictional Cities

Business Parks

Private Islands

(not a SL clone)

www.VirtualWorldCity.com



The Key to Go

Chapter Two:

by Stihly Augenblick a

photo



Golden Hills

Angie

and Hitomi Tamatzui

Photography by Hitomi Tamatzui

I never thought much of it, but I guess some women found me good looking. Growing up without a mother or sisters to put such foolishness in my head, I'd avoided that particular vanity. Working and playing side by side exclusively with men, with the exception of Mitohi, I never got any other idea in my head. Mitohi's feelings and her personal life were inscrutable and impenetrable.



Her personal feelings were never for me to know, except as they pertained to my latest bumbling. Still, more than a few women let on that they wouldn't

mind my boots under their bed. Of course, I wouldn't ever say no, but when they started getting the goo goo eyes and talking about the future, my stomach would turn. My only future was hunting down my father's killers and doing them the way Palienta did that prisoner.

In the end, when I needed that kind of affection, I went to the working girls that I encountered by the dozens on my patrols through the seedy, red light, districts of Mad City. Their pimps were more than willing to throw me a freebie, in return for my looking the other way, but I never took them up on their offers. There was no free lunch in Mad City. Everything, even the free things, had a cost.



I was quite content with my bachelorhood and my hookers until I met Angie. I was walking a beat one warm afternoon and looking in the window of a soda shop when I saw her sitting demurely at the counter. She was a stunning brunette. Long legs, a full bosom, an absolutely stunning face; she could stop a clock. She stopped mine. On some pretense, I went in and, in my usual awkward way, managed to strike up a conversation with her. I found out her name was Angie. She lived in a small walk-up around the corner. She was easy for me to talk to and had a way of making me feel like I was smart and funny.

She was a quick wit and her sense of humor, unlike Mitohi's, was rarely at my expense. From the very first moment, I felt at ease with her, something rare for me, and I felt another feeling I rarely enjoyed: affection. I liked Mitohi, but it was a different kind of affection. Mitohi mothered me, trained me, filled a void in my life left by my father's death, but she never inspired the feelings in me that Angie did from day one. I guess I could sort of understand what those dime store romance novels meant when they talked about love at first sight. I had always found that idea ridiculous, but Angie changed that in a moment.

After a few more meetings, I mustered up the nerve to ask her out on a date. I

was nervous as hell; no dark back alley lurking, knife wielding thug ever put anything remotely near that level of fear in me.



“What took you so long, Phil? I thought I was going to have to send you a singing telegram, of course I’ll go.” We went to a local greasy spoon diner for a dinner; it was all a patrolman’s salary could afford. You would have thought the food was the most heavenly fare, cooked by the maker himself. Every experience I shared with Angie made me feel this alive, in a way I hadn’t since my father’s murder.

The sky seemed bluer, the food was more delicious, the birds sang in three-part harmony; everything was shinier in the halo of her presence. We talked

about everything under the sun. She made me feel like one of those college eggheads, listening to my ideas about the way the police should operate and the government and the economy, agreeing with them and looking into my eyes as if I was smart and actually knew what I was talking about. When she talked, the sound of her voice had a captivating, melodic quality. She was very well read and what she lacked in formal education, like me, she more than made up in reading voraciously. I was completely captivated, as much by her words and her smarts, as by her knockout figure and pretty face.



At the end of our first date, I ran home through the rain with her. She was nimble and light-footed, even in heels. "I thought you said you were some



kind of football hero, Phil. Catch me if you can." We laughed all the way home,

Standing out on the stoop, we talked breathlessly, as if the hours in the diner weren't enough to contain everything we were bursting to tell each other. She touched my arm gently after a while. "You can't come up, Phil, I'm sorry, I'm not that kind of girl." She looked in my eyes, as if seeking a sign of disappointment. I hadn't even thought about that the whole evening together with her. "I'm not that kind of man, Angie", I stammered. This seemed to please her and her ever-present smile, which had momentarily dimmed when she thought she might disappoint me, returned in full. "See you tomorrow at the soda shop, Phil, you know the one, right?" Of course I knew the one. That, and every other detail pertaining to her, was etched in my memory.

Dates led to more dinners and outings together when my shift was over.



Talking led to kissing and stolen moments.



I spent my shifts watching the streets and watching over Angie when she walked the same streets as I did during my shift.



Walking a beat wasn't so bad any more. Even my burning desire for revenge seemed to recede. As Angie's love took over my heart, it seemed like I could almost escape the all-consuming, seething anger that had been my emotional life since my father's murder. Well, almost.



We returned to our first meeting place for a celebration when I earned my detective's badge. With the increased salary, Angie and I could get finally get hitched. At the counter where we had our first date, I popped the question, stuttering and nervous as all get out. Much to my relief, she said 'yes'. My heart just about flew out of my chest.

We were wed in a small ceremony by a local justice of the peace and soon afterwards moved into a nice two bedroom walkup; with a radio and a private bath.



Months later Angie was showing her pregnancy. Now was the time to settle down and become a family.

I fawned over her. Lifted her with glee whenever the mood struck me, which was often. She even had me smiling.

"There it is!" she would exclaim whenever she got it out of me, which, believe me, was harder than getting a made mobster to give up an accomplice.

A new theater show was in town. Finally, we could have a proper date 'out on the town'... I had saved my pennies to take Angie to the show to celebrate a quiet night, a night where no one got plugged.



But the quiet hid ugliness, violence; waiting to strike like a coiled copperhead in the tall grass.



We walked out and smiled. Hugged. I held her in his arms, so full of life, and thought: "nothing could be better."



As we got ready to go home, a fusillade of shots rang out at the theater. I ducked down and pulled Angie with me. I reached for my revolver, to find nothing there. Ordinarily I'd have it, but Angie had begged me to forget it 'for just one night.'

I watched helplessly as some gangster and his goons opened fired from across the street at another group of people departing the movie theater. They all were mowed down, except one woman.



As I covered Angie I watched in amazement as this tiny woman leaned over one of the fallen party, grabbed his gun, and wildly returned fire. I saw the gangsters sprint for cover.

Courageously or recklessly, she continued to run towards them, firing wildly; they fanned out.

I picked up a piece dropped by one of the fallen party and got off a couple of rounds but after a few more shots whizzed by us, the killers escaped into the night as police sirens howled.



I quickly returned to Angie and told her it was all over but she didn't respond.



"Angie," I yelled. I looked down and saw blood flowing from her chest. A stray bullet, return fire from the gangsters, had hit her right in the middle of her chest.

She died minutes later, along with our baby.



I saw the girl look back as I bent over Angie as life drained from her. "I will find and kill whoever did this to you," I

promised yet another person in my life. The girl ran off and I remained with Angie for a long while afterwards, but there was nothing that could be done. Angie and our unborn child were with the angels now.



I buried Angie and their unborn baby next to my father, but not the anger. All my police training felt worthless; I couldn't protect her and stop her killers. I was that scared boy from the store all over again. All I had learned; I couldn't do anything more now than back then.



I became obsessed with finding out who killed Angie and my unborn child, and why.

screamed was "The Theater Massacre," were mid- to high ranking leaders of the Chinese Triad on the West Coast. The gangster who engineered this slaughter became the major crime boss and was now almost untouchable; he had become too powerful.

My police work suffered once I realized how ineffective I really was. Beyond that, I ran into a streak of bad luck with my cases. Cases that seemed solid suddenly seemed to fall apart. DAs wanted more evidence before moving on open and shut cases. Witnesses and evidence mysteriously disappeared. Langer tried to tell me to stop making the gangsters a personal target and to let the others handle Angie's murder, but I couldn't hear him.

The Daily W

Sunday, August 30, 1934

Slaughter at Theater 10 dead

A gun battle between warring drug lords spilled over into the happy celebratory opening of the Garden City Movie Theatre tonight as 10 people were killed and 12 wounded. Included in those dead were the notorious Triad gangster Ira "The Tattooist" Silverstein Capote. Police arrived minutes after the battle to find people huddled behind walls and cars.

I became an expert in the Triad because it turned out those who were killed, at what the lurid press headlines



After a heated argument with Langer, I threw in the towel on another promising career.



I tossed my badge on Langer's desk. "Take this cheap piece of tin, for all the good it's done me."

Finally, I was outside the law and could investigate to my heart's content. I opened a private detective's office and started taking on clients but always with a mind to catching up with the murderers who ruined my life. "Where was that girl?" I thought as lead after lead went nowhere. "I'll find her yet."

A client wanted me to check out a business firm to see if it was legit. This would lead me on to Golden Hills.

. r — e — z .



The background is a dark, moody photograph of a bar interior. A sign on the wall reads "AFTER DARK" in red, with "Lounge" written below it in a smaller font. In the foreground, a large, shallow, light-colored bowl or dish is visible, containing some indistinct objects. The overall atmosphere is intimate and artistic.

Rhi's After Dark

On The Mai Tai Sim

CONTACT: Meegan Danitz
meegandanz@gmail.com
[Facebook.com/rhispoem](https://www.facebook.com/rhispoem)

The Singular of Kumiko

a new installation by



Photos and text by Jan

city

oy Bryn Oh

ni Mills



Bryn Oh's latest immersive installation, *The Singularity of Kumiko* (Immersiva (14, 104, 21)), opened February 14 on her sim, *Immersiva*, and for those of you who have been yearning for another of her mysterious narratives, with taut suspense and thought provoking moral and ethical challenges, your wait is over. Bryn is back with another stunning thriller that manages to provoke, frighten, and most importantly, entertain.

Bryn delivers more than cheap thrills, though. She asks us to ponder some

very weighty issues, like immortality and the paradigm of good and evil, and not just intellectually, either. She dares us to feel the heartache of loss, as well. Bryn doesn't let us off easy, and this piece, like all her work, is demanding; she makes us work if we're to get the full experience. It's a shame to think that many will zip through the piece in 20 minutes and say, "That was moody!" But to fully appreciate the installation, or any Bryn piece, you need to spend several hours over multiple visits; you'll have fresh insights each time you encounter it. It's always been true that the



more we invest in her work, the more Bryn rewards us.

I suppose it's a commentary on the fragmented nature of SL viewers these days, but Bryn gets the technical part of viewing her work out of the way early, when you land at the entrance of her installation. You're met with an array of instructions for maximizing the impact of her piece, depending on whether you're using Firestorm, Singularity, or SL Viewer3. Being a stickler for detail, Bryn wants to deliver the finest experience, so the few minutes spent adjusting Windlight and other settings at the beginning are well worth it.

Because of the immersive nature of Bryn's art, I recommend viewing this piece alone, late at night, with all your lights off. Go ahead and open a window and let a chilly breeze come in. And please, please turn up the volume, especially the ambient sounds. Now you're ready to experience the work the way Bryn intended. You'll be immersed in an environment that is at once enchanting and frightening. Be warned, however. You'll also be advised at the entrance that if, by

some unfortunate circumstance, you should happen to die while exploring, well, instructions will follow.

Opening a large circular red door, we quite literally enter into the mind of a dark, abstract figure. We're also met with a palpable sense of foreboding. Inside, it's nighttime in dark woods by an electric, cobalt blue ocean. There's been an accident - - the twisted frame of a bicycle lies nearby, the contents of a purse strewn everywhere. Our protagonist is on an island, but in a state of confusion, not quite knowing what happened, or where she is.









She receives a message from Iktomi, a friend of Kumiko's mother, which only adds to the mystery. She advises Kumiko that her childhood robotic power pet, Mr. Zippers, will soon be keeping her company, and keeping her safe. When she was a child, Kumiko initially rejected Mr. Zippers, who was acquired to replace her "organic" dog, Scruff, a German Shepherd/Border Collie mix who had died. And now Mr. Zippers has, in a most dramatic fashion, joined Kumiko on the island.

I must tell you, at this point I'm starting to become quite fearful. There's a

howling wind, chirping crickets, nocturnal bird calls, dogs barking, a mosquito buzzing by my ear. It's all very atmospheric and not a little unsettling. Was that a gunshot?

A mechanical contraption with spinning gears and rotating light bulbs appears in a clearing, broadcasting some type of Morse Code. The wind is picking up now, and it's very, very dark. I realize now, if I really wanted to scare myself out of my wits, I'd turn the volume even louder on the ambient sounds. I turn it up.

Without giving away too much of the lengthy story, told in an exchange of 14 letters between Kumiko and Iktomi, suffice it to say that tension builds as the mystery unfolds. And there are twists and turns along the way, including a hugely satisfying ending. In some



ways, this piece harkens back to Bryn's earlier existential explorations, such as *Anna's Many Murders*, *The Rabbicorn Story* and *Daughter of Gears*, replete with themes of love and loss, but also warnings about the perils of corruption and the creeping, insidious threat posed by our dazzling technology.

In the final scene, if you have a lump in your throat and a tear in your eye, you, like Kumiko, have arrived at your destination. In the background, you'll hear the strains of Bryn's signature ode to mortality - - Vera Lynn's anthem, *We'll*

Meet Again, which ties everything together.

*Let's say goodbye with a smile, dear
Just for a while, dear
We must part
Don't let this parting upset you
I'll not forget you, sweetheart*

*We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day*

*Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Til the blue skies drive the dark clouds
Far away*

*And I will just say hello
To the folks that you know
Tell them you won't be long*

*They'll be happy to know
That as I saw you go
You were singing this song:*

*'We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day...'*

Once again, Bryn ends with a powerful punch that leaves us slightly dazed and emotionally spent, but Oh so satisfied.

. r — e — z .

photography

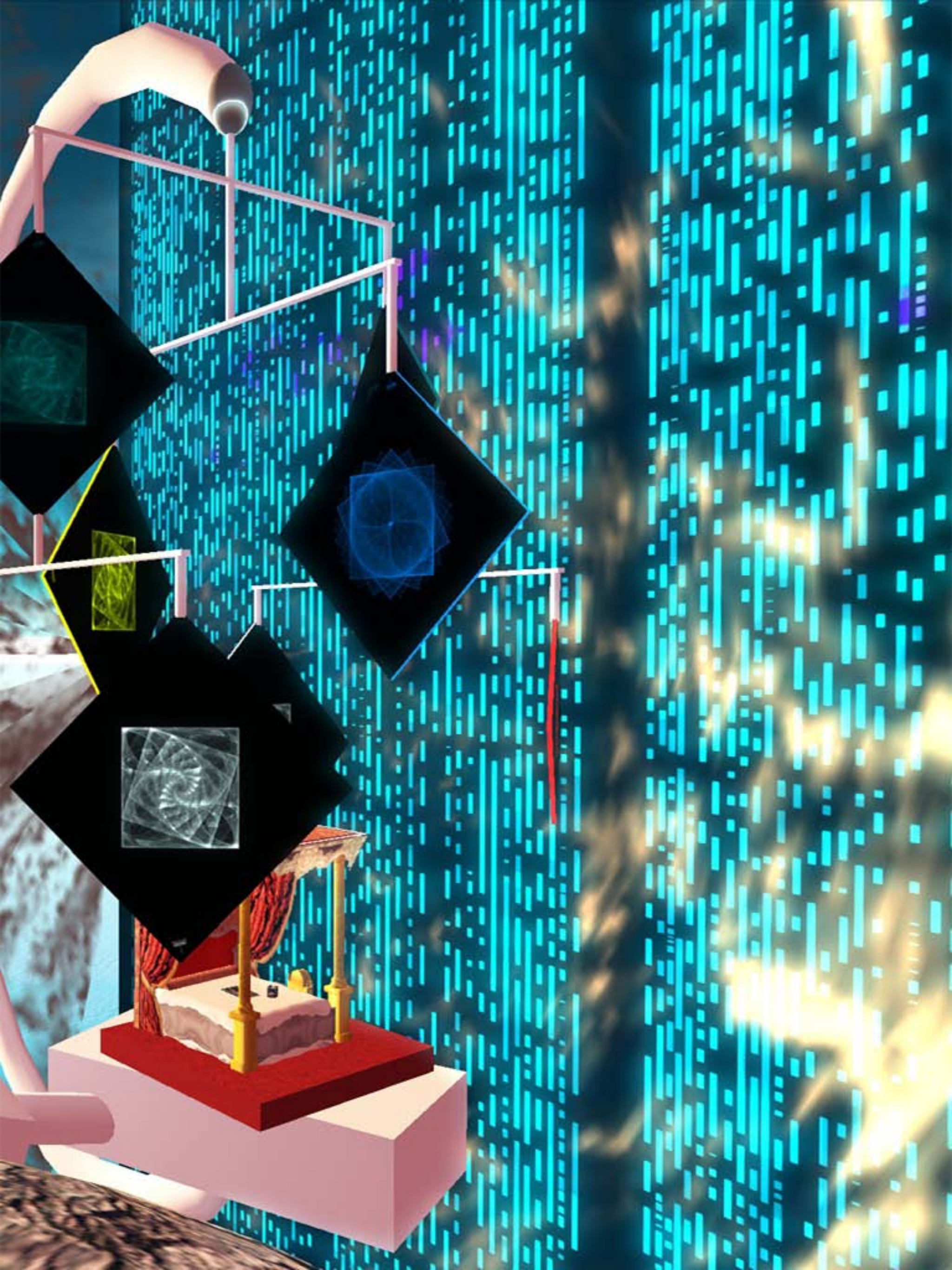
jami mills



The Artefact: Back Dive Into the Depth by Art Blue

I am sitting in the hospital,
shielded by a 4-D field, a plug in
my head and two annihilators
running around claiming to be
anxious about my health. They
call themselves Angela and
Cindy, camouflaged as they
please, as nurses or as angels.





Even the name tags given them by Leon, addressing himself as chief of security, are a sign of dishonor. Angela is a coded canonic isomorph, and Cindy is just there to keep me in the inner product space, which is a sort of extended Euclidian space. As a result, I can't tunnel out of the clinic. To tease me, but this just makes me angry, they like to wear fractal dresses for teatime when I choose one of my favorite Windlight settings and call this "the art of the depth." What a scron when I look out from my tea table next to the public view point and see the reflection of the long cube I am in on the open sea. I know well that this hospital is really a copy of "The Machine" made by Moe and Lilia long ago in a realm called Linden Endowment of the Arts. The Machine moves Mondrian structures in layers and random orders along the outer borderlines so I can't use a visual decoding of this programmed art to slip out.

Prof. Sol has a guilty conscience. He has passed to me word through a visitor that Prof. Sol is working on a "transfiguring salvation," as the visitor called it, putting a special emphasis on transfiguring. Does he know what this all implies for me as The First who even knows what real space has been?

In the meantime, I found out why I am here in the hospital and have two A.I.s as jailers. They say: "You have

Alzheimer's and you are contagious." Alzheimer's? Bullshit. Sure, I got the exact code by Prof. Sol that I had ordered: a moderate Alzheimer's. Unluckily the parameter "D" - D for dynamic was at maximum. So the sirens wailed and I was delivered with ICAD F00.9D - "Alzheimer's - highly virulent" to the hospital I'm in now.

I read, as reading is still allowed, that my sponsor is bailing on damages and compensation and that the administration has to pay it all. Suddenly, I am his beloved and admired First Prim. "The greatest digital artist of all time infected with Alzheimer's," was on title page of the Universal Gazette, the leading paper of absolute truth produced as I see now no longer by me, or by my former me, but by Fletcher's visions.

As a result, prices for my artwork spiral on the market. I get nothing out of this. Not even a single terra to code to work on my mission. My sponsor takes it all. I have to cut the knot. I must leave. Alexander the Great comes to mind. What would he have done if he had been binary?

The scales fell from my eyes suddenly on a fine afternoon as I visited the SR Hadden lookout. This view point is not easy to reach, but stays within the hospital complex. You need to know this billionaire to get a pass for a visit. Cindy was wearing a fractal dress. It

occurred to me that this dress might be stolen. Why this? SR Hadden put an installation around his oversized bed he likes to have in the style of King Louis XIV, made by the famous digital artist Gaianed. In this installation moving like a mobile or a wind chime, I saw fractal art hanging. The cL-box showed the creator link Aurora MyCano. And then I remembered: I bought a fractal texture from her exclusive. I set it on a ring for Jami Mills. The ring was no copy. And now this texture is part of the mobile of SR Hadden?

serving as a witness in court. I now need the attorney who helped me in the past. The one who thinks on his own. Of course, such an attorney does not exist. Such a person can't exist. But I had one who at least worked on the thoughts I made up in my mind and then slipped the suited paragraphs over the table, not failing to mention that this is beyond anything ever done before and not the usual procedure. It just eats up a tremendous amount of time. I could face politics this way, but not the law. But that's exactly what I need - - a

I found out why I'm here in the hospital with two A.I.s as jailers. They say: "You have Alzheimer's and you are contagious." Alzheimer's? Bullshit.

"Yeah," I shouted. "My kingdom for an attorney!" Immediately, Cindy was about to press some ugly buttons to call Leon. Scared that his famous words, "Wake up. Time to die," would now target me, I hurried to say: "No. No. Relax. It was a quote from Shakespeare that just came to mind." I could see in Cindy's face what she really thought: "There is nothing to top Alzheimer's." But I know she's wrong. An attorney can top it. He knows the ways Alzheimer's happens and that it's most often the disease a client gets when

time eater. Something that consumes the time of the others. A Pac-Man. The calculation is easy. Somehow or other, I am in the hospital. If I sleep, kick my heels, lick my wounds - I have time - and I can't make any money at all. So let them eat time.

I live on the public's dime. But in case I make trouble, really fat trouble, and make Angela and Cindy livid with rage so they have to turn to attospeed to keep control of me, then I will manage to let the clinic budget burst and they'll have to take me seriously. Between

attocomputing and the femtocomputing that is available for me, there is a performance factor of 10^{18-15} , and that's a hell of a burner.

When I spam the world with art of Sergius Both and shout, "These are the coded settings to get free from thrall-dom," then you don't need to be a great mathematician to see that even attocomputing will not help to find out in real time which of the artworks are a real danger and which are not.

Just now my attorney arrives. Status: retired lawyer with a certificate to prop up his pension. Just the very right one. Allowed at court "to prop up his pension." In other words, charity at its lowest. Like he's only able to bail out some monkeys. "Two Alzheimer's meeting," I have heard Angela and Cindy in the cantina of the hospital. I have my sources.

The primsculpt server in the hospital is treated like an indian Shudra, nearly a Paria. Someone said "To fix updates, he's good enough. And for you, it will be sufficient," when I once asked who could check my old SQL-Lite inventory on some double entries without drilling into my brain. Since he got copy of this wording, he's fed up with everything smelling like administration and let me eavesdrop. Sometimes art helps beyond hierarchy and is the knight in shining armor.

Well, my lawyer says it is not forbidden to present art and to speak of coding as long as it is not done in bad faith. Deliberate deception, *dolus praemeditatus*. Being old Latin, this sounds good to me. It fits that I knew the old Zuse and worked on this Calculating Universe by using the codename SICELA.

Artworks aren't just for something with a link in it, like a QR-Code, since they're in the simulator visual coded specifications. No, they put the universe upside down. Simulation of Cellular Automats in the Calculating Universe. The scientific form of Fassbinder's *World on a Wire*. At least in the time of Konrad Zuse it was innovation, raw and pure. It was the time most people thought an avatar was something like a SpongeBob moved by mouse and keyboard.

Zuse was not only the inventor of the computer, but also a skilled painter - and together we had exhibitions. Where's the bad faith now? That this all happened in a different world, called in this pre-femto time "The Real World," makes no difference as I carry everything of my maker inside my code.

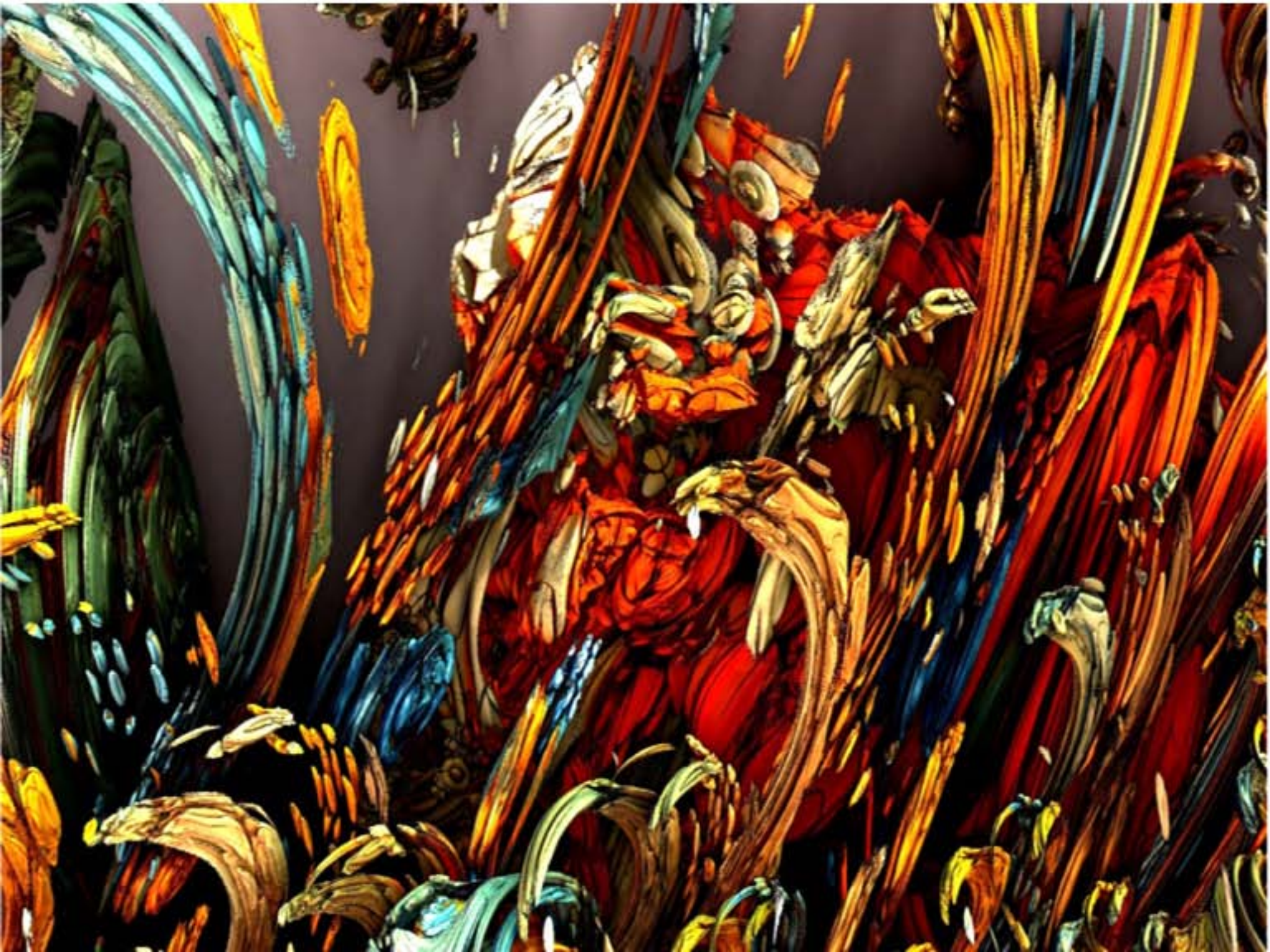
You can't follow? Who can follow art being created out of the computer in all the fifty shades of grey? Even fractals have problems understanding me from time to time. Fifty shades of grey. They

don't get the point - - they just turn to black and white as an answer. We know they reproduce themselves by going deeper. They never stop to generate beautiful structures of art. For them, this is a piece of cake. I'm not made this way. I can't do this. I'm no fractal. I know to copy the thinking structure of an artist to an avatar and it's easy for me. I have the tables for this made by Prof. Bainbridge.

Why do you think humans are made this way? To make it easy to copy them? You got it! But then the problem

begins. Some are not ready for success. But I am ready! Minutes later, the room is filled with artefacts. Mondrian 2-D and 3-D, all mixed. "Parameters optimized by principles of cybernetic aesthetics?" some may ask. Bullshit! Everything that pops out of the art machine that Sergius Both developed in 1979 and named MONDRIAN is called art. This became a fact in 2011, as Bremer Kunsthalle noted in its collection policy. Digital art made before year 1980. Full stop. This we collect. Full stop. Digital art dated after 1980 has to wait. There has to be fresh

Gem Preiz "Fractal Abstract Snakes"



money to buy it and, even more importantly, to archive it properly, to conserve it. And the archive costs money, year after year, and this isn't cheap at all.

a little booster added. You got it right: the primserver of the clinic intersperses all the stuff that is somewhere next to the rubbish bin. Abortive patches of Microsoft, drillers by Neverdie Inform-

No one in the art world wants what you throw on the market. Only an old date signature brings the value. Your stuff is freshly baked. Nobody needs this.

I let the art explode. ArtXploder in a new way. I publish everything. Topload to Ebay, you could say. Bidding price: Zero. And all the bloggers get furious: "First Prim floods the market with new works of Mondrian. Everything worthless Alzheimer's? Or is there a code behind?" Everyone knows in the simulator: Windings Hoax Q33 NY was an aimed canard to protect the real code. How was the code protected these days? Very simple: Q33 NY was the top news that brought the blogs to a boil, and there was no space left to make the backroom boys visible.

This has to be the way for me. A false positive. Color selection that is truly disgusting. Leaving subareas of the drawing surface empty to create the mystery of the emptiness. Just digital art made by the computer himself, with

ation Systems, forced shutdown, articles from Universal Gazette who have never been published. On top, a few good old bluescreens are still in my friend's inventory, now ready to become part of an artefact. I am proud of the chaos that takes place.

There's a knock at my screen. What is this? Someone knocking. After such a long time now I hear this familiar sound coming from outside the sphere. It's my sponsor. "Prim, my old guy. What's up?" I can't believe such an asshole and I bark back: "All fine. I am where everything started. In the depth. I feel reborn. Self-controlled. I am the real me. I am a maker!" I get interrupted harshly with "Nonsense. You have Alzheimer's and you talk trash. Why are you doing this?" I play stupid: "What? Are the prices for the artefacts I made for you in free fall?" I hear my

sponsor suspire. "How's this? No one in the art world wants what you throw on the market. Only an old date signature brings the value. Your stuff is freshly baked. Nobody needs this."

Now, finally, my sponsor speaks out where the shoe pinches: "I have a different problem; the invoice the hospital issued for treating your Alzheimer's. They switched their A.I.s to attospeed and I have to pay! Stop this Mondrian invasion by forms of Sergius Both. They tell me there might be a hidden code in them. Freedom from thrall-dom. Freedom from slavery. Freedom for everyone. Such captions on your pictures are treated as an attack on the infrastructure of the clinic. And I shall pay!"

I respond: "Interesting. Why do you have to pay? I'll do it on my own. I want to get out of here!" I notice silence. "Hmm ... ah" After a while, "... I put you under tutelage. Due to the International Code for Avatar Diseases ICAD F00.9, I had no other choice. You are contagious. And I need to survive. I need to make some income. For this I set you on Remote Control during the time you slept and let the good old Sergius Both create real Artefacts MONDRIAN 2-D and 3-D with time stamp – you know what is needed best for the markets. That's why now they say that I, as your custodian, have to pay for the extended

treatment not covered by Obamacare."

I understand quickly. The cards are being reshuffled. I stop ArtXploder and call back my artworks from Ebay. "Well," I say. "One hand washes the other. You made billions off me. I want my life back. Bring Prof. Sol to me. 32 Terra should be good for him to encapsulate my Alzheimer's and I can leave this rotten hospital quickly."

. r — e — z .

[Editor's Note: What follows is a short interview with the author by Jami Mills.]

J.M.: *We met two months ago to discuss publishing your short story "The Artefact" in rez Magazine. You said you wrote about the life of an artist transported in an avatar using the computer technology of the future. In the February issue of rez, you made a break, however, saying you didn't want to miss the opportunity to write about Gem Preiz's installation, "The Cathedral Dreamer." So, now you've created a literary gap into the flow of "The Artefact." In this episode, you're back in the clinic where the first chapter ended. So, let me ask this: Cindy and Angela, two characters you brought with you from "The Cathedral Dreamer" into this story, is there something hidden to discover? And I*

have another question regarding SR Hadden. I noticed the place at the grand opening of JadeYu Fhang's installation "Roots and War" in grid Metropolis. It's really there!

A.B.: Oh yes, it's all real. In the movie *The Annihilator* (1986), Brion James plays the boss of two androids, Cindy and Angela, who care for and kill, camouflaged as humans. "Wake up. Time to die." These short words spoken in *Blade Runner* made Leon Kowalski (played by Brion James) immortal. Lisa Blount (who played Cindy) received an Oscar in 2002. Your readers may find out now also some interesting facts about Angela – and SR Hadden as one of the billionaires in fiction. I definitely would like to have his support. Basically, the message is that you need to be at the right place at the right time. But also you just don't know that you might become famous for something you did in the past and it could be something very little. That's Sergio Both in my story.

*J.M.: I see. Maybe I'll become famous for editing your stories in rez. *laughs* All joking aside, it's much more likely that Aurora MyCano will become famous, as I adore her fractals. Let's just hope the bad boys aren't the ones having all the fun and becoming immortal. Now to a different aspect, and I'm sorry we're running out of space, so this has to be the last for today: You told me that it's very easy to look "behind" the story to uncov-*

er some hints and other details you build into it. I Googled the term ICAD F00.9D that stands for your Alzheimer's disease and found in first position a link to the Universal Gazette, established in Philadelphia in 1797. You, I discovered, indeed bought it. By clicking along, not surprisingly, there appears a link to "The Artefact" and the simulator you live in.

A.B.: Well done, Jami! Just as I am an avatar, the code is ICAD – International Code for Avatar Disease. For you humans it is ICD. Google again and you are affected.

J.M.: OMG. There's the real Alzheimer's, but I can't get the extension 9-D.

A.B.: *laughs* Indeed. Maybe I used the German (D) version of the ICD? Maybe D stands for Digital. Maybe this type will hit the United States in the century this story happens.

J.M.: God willing, type D will stay in the simulator.

. r — e — z .

[Editor's Note: Opposite is a dress designed by solasnagealai (aka Solas), owner of BMe [Ranthambore (86, 130, 1003)], utilizing fractal artwork created by Aurora Mycano. A portion of each purchase goes to benefit The Michael J. Fox Foundation's fight against Parkinson's disease. TeamFox, Aloft Nonprofit Commons (147, 127, 38)]



Aurora's Suit

Rigged Mesh dress

XS - L

nm/c/nt



Our Fables Become Us

by Adrian Blau

In the fable, my hand hovers
over the heart of the river
and something is wailing
in the corridors of the sea.

It takes no vain crow
or woodsman wiping his bloody axe
on the white scarf of the snow
to know we have something other
than boys pretending wolves
circle the forest of our fears.

The river's pulse slackens
sick from venom
spreading through the blooming sump
along the tidal bitten crust of land—
pierces the blue shield of the limping crab.

In the fable, two osprey
give themselves to the river,
becoming four as the stars rise
into a story-wheel where we might read
the consequences of indifference.

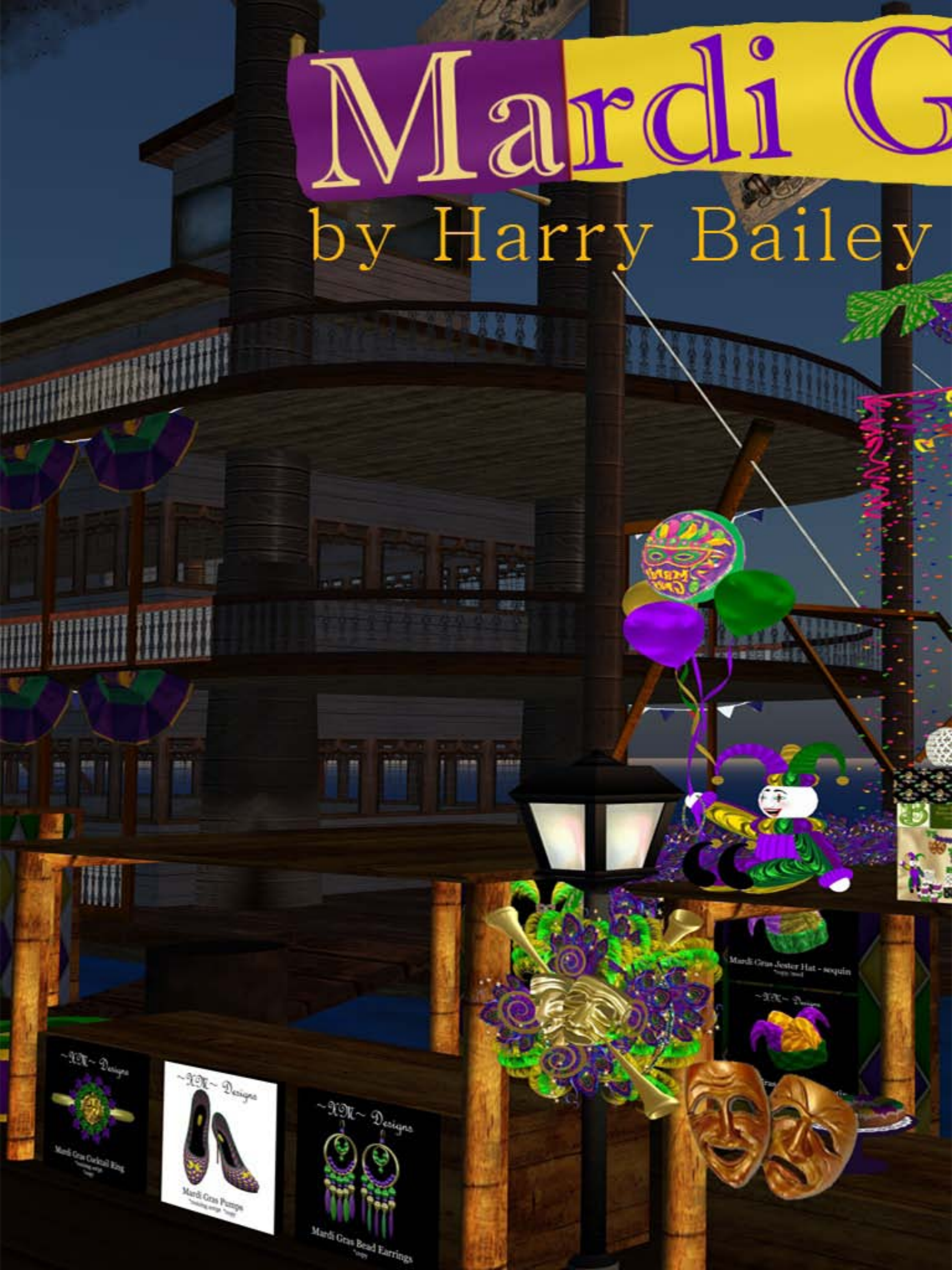
In the fable, we are passengers
who have come to this suffering river
to shed our different languages
and to become one healing song
under a moon bright as water.

S
ir



Mardi G

by Harry Bailey



rras!



Mysterious, romantic, classy, tasteful, sultry, engaging, entertaining, mystical. The talent for drawing a crowd for no special reason other than to appreciate life. Some would say those are the qualities of any male aspiring to become a gentleman. But in this March article, I refrain from using all those qualities to describe any one individual. I apply them instead to a most enjoyable event we are about to experience in all its charms and delights.

Are you ready to celebrate this month with wild and excited abandon? Well, prepare yourself, because due to vagaries of our calendar, that important movable holiday we all cherish will be very late this year, and will allow us to party on in March for the first time in many years. Yes, I'm talking about Carnival/Mardi Gras! (Fat Tuesday in French) Of course, if you are cultured in the appreciation of this feast, then you know that the preparations begin a full year in advance. This allows for anticipation, camaraderie and, if nothing else, a wonderful excuse to get together with both old and new friends. For a friendly meal already prepared, take a trip over to *Winddragon* [Winddragon Isle (148,12,25)], where you can dine on, or even purchase, the whole buffet line's tasteful Cajun feast with one click!

Hopefully, most of you are aware of

this ancient mystical precursor of Lent, when people throughout the world abandon their bad habits so they can be very, very good for the next 40 days and nights of the Lenten season. Of course, these days we mostly just see it as a great way to celebrate that other holiday, SPRING BREAK!



But this event is much more significant, and dare I say "Gentlemanly," than the image of debauchery. To celebrate this event with the style it demands, one must appreciate all the rituals of the night and the weeks that lead up to it. Of course, the spots most often connected to these celebrations are New Orleans in the US, and Rio in Brazil. The event originated in Europe centuries ago and was cloaked in style.

Masks have always been basic requirements, adding to the mystery and allowing one to over-indulge in anonymity. One can find a wonderful variety of costumes and masks across SL, but if you go shopping, try *Illusions* [Carnivale (145, 51, 45)]. Balls were the place to see and be seen, even when you had no idea whom it was you were seeing! Food is important, as you will be spending the next several weeks surviving on pickled cod, so eat up all that very expensive sugar and cake tonight, for tomorrow we all go on our diets!

But I get ahead of myself. Preparations begin a year in advance, and some groups of friends have an almost permanent fixation on the Fat Tuesday build up. Entertaining parades are a key component, and floats are built by various groups, or "Krewes" as they are known. Floats are quite ornate, and provide the platform for throwing out massive amounts of beads to be worn with pride throughout the festival. One of the more popular parades is the Pet's Parade, where even the animals get into the spirit. SL doesn't have this parade

mania yet, but there are a few groups that are beginning to have some fun. Krewe du Jieus - The Virtual Division is owned by self-proclaimed Tragically Misunderstood Artists, and the Pet



Parade group exists as a place for pet lover events. In a virtual world of builders, one would think if we began now we could organize an amazing Mardi Gras parade of floats for 2015!

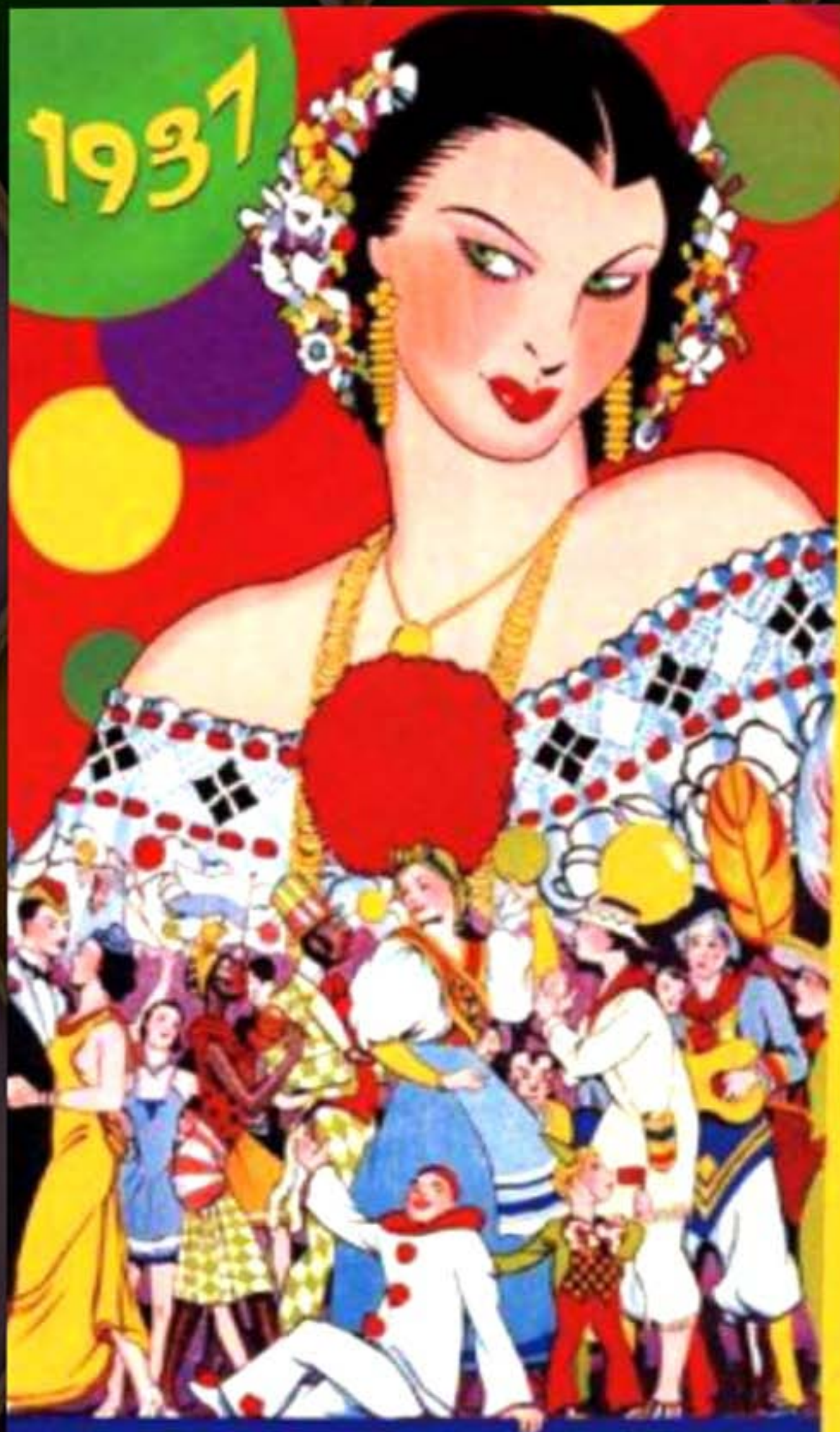
So, after spending many months with friends planning and building your Krewe's float for the various parades,

Carnival



Abel Valle

1931



MARDI

GRAS

NEW ORLEANS

you'll have another great tradition to enjoy - - munching on sweets with friends each night from King's Night (January 6th) until Fat Tuesday (March 5th) and eating king cakes in hopes of winning the prize inside. Each cake is baked with a small token inside. This can be anything from a solid gold coin, to a small plastic or china baby doll. The cake, of course, is entirely devoured by the group of friends, and

port to *Bourbon Street* [New Orleans City (175, 205, 21)]. Yes, it does exist in SL! , And for those of you who might want to slip in a little time travel, then *Victorian Steampunk New Orleans* is the place for you [Mieville Poe (77, 18, 21)], complete with a paddle-wheeler! Of course, both locations come with a complete inventory of shops to help you build your inventory, just as Royal Street does in RL N.O. during the day,

A Fat Tuesday afternoon would not be complete without a ride on the Streetcar Named Desire, or the paddlewheel, Natchez

whoever gets the piece hiding the token must prepare the next cake and host the next party. If you are not a baker, then you can find a variety of New Orleans foods and other necessities for your party at *Divinity Celebrates Mardi Gras* [Minna (240, 41, 25)]. They cover everything from crawfish gumbo bowls to king cakes with balloons and Hurricanes along the way.

A Fat Tuesday afternoon would not be complete without a ride on the Streetcar Named Desire, or the paddlewheeler Natchez along the Mississippi. In fact, those experiences do exist in SL. For that streetcar, one need only tele-

when it's closed off to traffic. Remember to stock up on Hurricane glasses while shopping so you are ready for the night ahead!

It's not a true Mardi Gras celebration, however, without the famous *Pat O'Brien's* Hurricane! Invented in the 1940s due to an over-abundance of rum, this classic is now the standard for the evening. Served in a huge hurricane lamp-shaped glass, it can last the night, although I have known (and walked Bourbon street with) sailors who drank six in one bar crawl down Bourbon Street. The Perfect Gentlemen drinks his with class at *Pat O'Brien's*, sitting

next to the world famous "flaming fountain" with his group of close friends, savoring the evening and listening to the music of the city in the background. Now I don't believe there is a *Pat O'Brien's* here in SL, but there are any number of amazing Fat Tuesday parties throughout the blues community of SL. This gentleman will most probably cruise many of them, and if history is any indicator, end up on the roof of *Hotlanta* [Northfarthing (24, 214, 602)] in the wee hours of the morning, where the manager, Is Salas, one of the old Preservation Hall sim managers, keeps blues and jazz alive, and holds one of the best Mardi Gras events in SL. Get there early and plan on finding a nice spot to dance up on the roof. Remember to come in appropriate attire for the evening. Masks are critical, of course. The colors of the night are green, gold, and purple, so plan accordingly, and beads are a symbol of your status. Silly hats are optional, but add to the fun.

As you have probably already surmised, I have enjoyed quite a few trips down to the "Big Easy," as New Orleans likes to be known. Yet, I am still an outsider looking in on all the amazing traditions of that city and how it celebrates. But I can tell you that the true celebration of Fat Tuesday is NOT, and I emphasize, **ABSOLUTELY NOT**, standing out on Bourbon Street in an inebriated state, with visions of throw-

ing strands of glass beads up to balconies in hopes of enticing some buxom beauty to raise her top and flash you with her charms. While this may on the surface appear to some to be lusty, I can assure you that if you want sultry, romantic, and engaging, then you need to build your evening on a sound foundation. Formal attire, or a well chosen costume, are a start.



Study up on the history and traditions of the celebration so you can share intelligent conversations with those in your party group. Plan an evening that includes many possible haunts, so you and your friends (or your companion) can find one you enjoy, and that fits the mood. Know your dances and how to work the dance selections in each sim.

For extra PG credit, come up with a few musical requests fitting the theme of the evening that you can have dedicated to your companion. Then, be ready to share with them just why you chose this particular piece of music as a dedication to them alone on this special night. Remember, in true Mardi Gras fashion, you are both masked and unknown to each other, so this is your one opportunity to impress them and with just what a romantic you are!

To appreciate this night of wonder, you must understand the lore of the evening and the city. In the case of New Orleans, that includes *Preservation Hall* and authentic blues and jazz played by the best. While SL no longer has a sim of that name, it existed long enough to seed many of the clubs, hosts and DJs with the spirit of great blues and jazz! If you want, some even let you sit on the plank floor as you listen. Remember, if you want to request The Saints, then you'd better be prepared to tip an extra \$20L for the privilege!

Cafe Du Monde is the cap to any Fat Tuesday evening at 1:00 a.m. for chicory coffee and beignets (deep fried confections covered in powdered sugar - - hot, sweet, and sultry). Nestled along the mighty Mississippi levee, there is no more romantic spot under the canopy and its festive bright white lights! I mean really strong dark coffee and a plate load of sugar. You and your

companion are now ready to be up and energized all night! While the only sims I could find in SL using Du Monde in their name were all women's French clothing locations, there are some great coffee shops that fit the spirit of the night's ending quite well. PG recommends *Good Friends Spill the Beans - Open Air Coffee Cafe & Hangout* [SkyBream Stillwater (161, 143, 22)].

The donut and coffee animations are not too bad as eating animations go, but don't try to sit and drink or dine unless you plan on a lap full of hot coffee. Finish up those treats, then head down along the water to the animated park bench under the stars, and test out the couples hug and snuggle animations to finish off your festivities.

Alas, in RL New Orleans, the streets close down strictly at 2:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday morning, so at this point, you'd better find that secret hideout spot to spend the rest of the night with your mysterious and, hopefully, amorous companion. I leave the rest of the night to your imaginations, but how can you go wrong having shared a night like this! And if you've not made any plans, please don't be knocking on my door! Your PG will be very busy by two a.m.!

. r — e — z .

Encyclopedia by Crap Mariner

After Encyclopedia Brown went off to college, the next kid to become the town know-it-all was Glossary Jones.

This kid knew a whole bunch of obscure terms and jargon, but he kept them to himself until the other kids would solve the mystery.

Then there was Footnote Martin. Every now and then, he'd make a comment about something, or provide some obscure reference that nobody had time to look up.

Finally, there was Almanac Lewis. He was always blithering useless trivia and weather tables.

"Just call the goddamned police," people say now. "They're incompetent, but at least they're not annoying."



Finn McCool is Not a Sportsbar

by Gudrun Gausman





image by John Walters

What's Your Issue?

a monthly advice column by
Gudrun Gausman

Dear Gudrun -

Recently, I stumbled upon the *Seanchai Library* in Second Life (SL in SL, LOL): "The Seanchai ('Storyteller' in Irish) celebrates the Celtic tradition of stories told around the hearth or in the pub to friends, family, and welcomed strangers. The *Seanchai Library* brings stories of all kinds to life, in Second Life."

I am really looking forward to hearing some stories there, especially some appropriate to the upcoming St. Patrick's Day season. Some of the Irish stories they have on tap seem to focus on Finn McCool. Though I am Irish (Irish-American), I really, really don't know much about this apparently heroic character. What can you tell me about him?

For the most part, I hope to hear stories, not tell them, but with the Irish storytelling tradition, if I'm ever called upon to tell a story, I want some material on hand.

Yours,

Seamus Fimicoloud

Dear Seamus -

Finn McCool is prime grist for the storytelling mill. Though a chauvinistic pig, probably inarticulate, and basically a mama's boy, he seems to embody most of the characteristics sought after in heroic figures. Think of the massively muscled body builders who are really sissies. Real Irish heroes probably bore more of a resemblance to Hinky Dink Kenna or Bathhouse John Coughlin than to Arnold Schwarzenegger. :=)

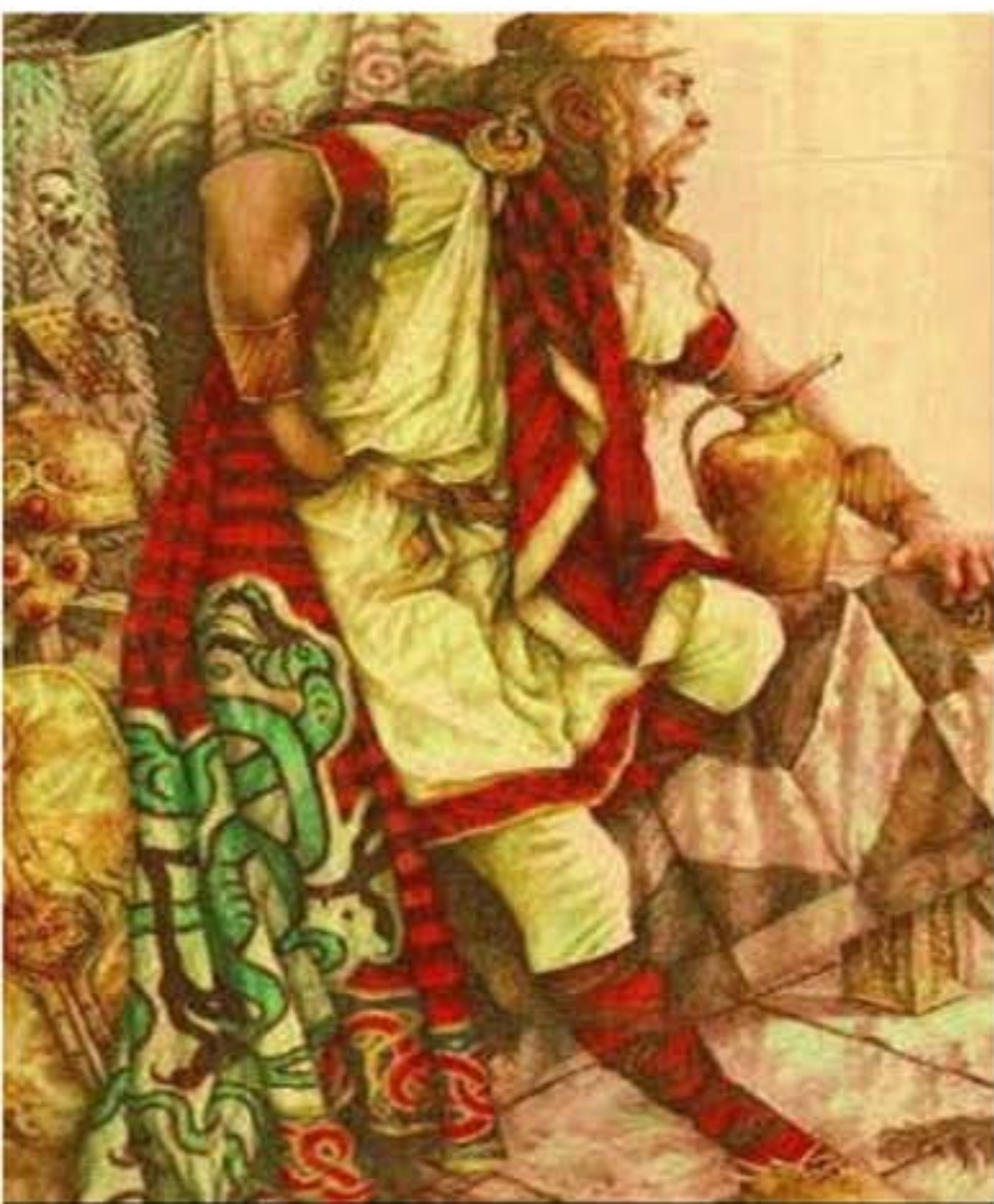
Finn was the son of Cumhall, leader of the Fianna (a warrior brotherhood), and Muirne, daughter of a Druid named Tadg MacNuadat. When Cum-

hall first requested the hand of Muirne in marriage, Tadg spurned him. In classic dissed-warrior fashion, Cumhall abducted the daughter and carried her off. It is unclear whether she was kidnapped or whether it was a consensual elopement, but who cares? She was just a woman. Her father's feelings, however, counted.

Tadg appealed to Conn of the Hundred Battles, High King of Ireland. Conn expelled Cumhall from the Fianna, and sent the brotherhood against him. Cumhall was hunted down and killed by Goll MacMorna, the new leader of the Fianna.

Muirne, however, had already become pregnant at the fertile hands (or whatever) of Cumhall. Tadg could not stand this, as it violated his rights as a father, and ordered her burned at the stake. Conn, an enlightened monarch in some ways, placed Muirne under his protection and sent her to live with Cumhall's sister Bodhmall (a Druid priestess) and her husband Fiacal. Muirne gave birth to a son, Deimne, whom she left in the care of Aunt Bodhmall and her best friend, a blademistress named Liath Luachra. (Fionn is actually a nickname meaning "blond," "fair," "white," or "bright," that was given to Deimne.)

So, "Fionn MacCumhaill" spent his formative years in a magical forest be-



FINN MCCOOL



ing trained in them arts of war and hunting. You can imagine that, in this slightly unorthodox setting, double-mothered by a witch and a warrior, he had some unusual and life-changing experiences.

One of these was at the hands of the leprechaun-like Druid and poet, Finnegas. Finnegas had spent many years trying to catch the fabled Salmon of Wisdom that lived in a pool on the River Boyne. Whoever ate this fish would gain supreme intelligence, a super-power befitting a super-hero. Finnegas eventually caught the fish, and told the boy Finn to cook it for him. While cooking the fish, Finn burned his thumb.

Instinctively sticking his thumb in his mouth to assuage the pain, he swallowed a piece of the salmon's skin. Henceforth, he would always be able to solve a problem simply by sticking his thumb in his mouth. Plus, he suddenly realized how to avenge his father's death and restore his family's honor: he decided that he would save the lands of Tara from Aillen

the Burner.

Every year at Samhain (harvest), the fire breathing Aillen would lull the men of Tara to sleep with harp music, and



MOUND OF THE HOSTAGES - TARA

then burn it to the ground. The Fianna, led by Goll MacMorna, were not able to prevent the attacks. But Finn had a plan. He kept himself awake through the harp playing by sticking himself in the forehead with the point of his own spear. He then ran out to confront Aillean as soon as he appeared. Aileen tried to torch Finn, but Finn foiled this attack by throwing his cloak over the demon's head, then punching him. The monster attempted to flee, but Finn speared it and, as it faltered, finished it off.

the object of his desire (Sabhbh) into a red deer. In another case, a fairy (Ucht-dealb of the Fair Breast) was ticked about a human wedding and turned the bride (Turrean) into a sweet-tempered hound. This hound turned out to be the best hunter ever. The hound had puppies, equally sweet-tempered and equally skilled as hunters. The puppies were given by the hound's owner to Finn.

One day while hunting, the hounds, Bran and Sceolan, came upon a beauti-

Henceforth, he would always be able to solve a problem simply by sticking his thumb in his mouth

After this display of wisdom and heroism, the High King (Conn's grandson) immediately gave Finn command of the Fianna. Goll willingly stepped aside and became a (somewhat) loyal follower. Finn also got compensation for his father's death in the form of Tadg's home. :-/

As commander of the Fianna, Finn had many adventures, and some of the more interesting stories involve people as animals. In one case, a Druid (Fer Doirich) had been spurned, and turned

ful red deer that they refused to attack. Having had a once-human mother, they had a sixth sense about the deer. Finn allowed the deer to follow them back to the fort, and when it passed through the gates, the Druid curse was broken and she was transformed into the beautiful Sadhbh, who became Finn's most famous wife. (There were quite a few wives. Me, I like Oona.) And it was also Bran and Sceolan who found Finn's son, Oison, in the woods among the red deer herds after his wife had been stolen from him.

In others, as a GIANT, Finn alters the geography of Ireland. In one case, he builds the Giant's Causeway so that he can get across to Scotland (without getting wet) for a fistfight with another giant. In another, he hurls a chunk of Ireland at a rival, but misses, thus creating the Isle of Man, Rockall, and Lough Neagh. Fingal's Cave in Scotland is also named after Finn, and in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, "Fingle" is often used to refer to Newfoundland and its culture. (OMG, I'm part Newfie!! FINGLE!!!)

Anyway, all good things must come to an end. There are many variations on Finn's death, including one in which he merely sleeps under Ireland, surrounded by the Fianna. In Eire's hour of greatest need, Finn will awaken, sound his hunting horn, and the Fianna will awaken and come to its rescue.

Whatever. I'm going to wind up with this little yarn. Finn was often portrayed as a magical, benevolent giant. In this one, he was busy sucking his magic Thumb of Knowledge, when he



GIANTS' CAUSEWAY

noticed something...

Long ago, there lived a giant called Cuhullin.

My, but he was big and fierce and strong.

And what made him so strong?

He had a magic finger. And believe it or not,

all his strength was in that little finger.

Now Cuhullin had fought all the other giants,

and squashed them flat. Well, all but one,

and that was Finn McCool.

When Finn sucks his magic thumb, Finn can see Cuhullin coming to get him. But Finn doesn't want to fight. Finn has gotten old. Finn is SCARED. So he runs straight home to his wife, Oona. Will Cuhullin find Finn McCool and SQUASH HIM FLAT? I don't think so...

Oona isn't scared, not one bit. She just laughs . . . She dresses her husband as a baby, and hides him in a cradle. Then she makes immense piles of hotcakes, hiding griddle-irons in some. When Cuhullin arrives, Oona tells him that Finn is out, but will be back shortly. Cuhullin tries to intimidate Oona with stunts like breaking stones with his middle finger. As a courtesy and to pass the time, Oona offers Cuhullin a loaded hotcake, which chips his teeth when he bites into it. Oona points out

that her husband easily eats these hotcakes, and feeds one to baby McCool, who eats it with no problem.

Cuhullin is so impressed by the power of the baby's teeth, he puts his fingers into Finn's mouth to feel them. Finn bites off his middle finger. Cuhullin, having lost the source of his power, and reduced to the size of an ordinary human being, shamefacedly flees.

Remember Naked City?? Well, however many stories there were in Tara in the Third Century A.D., these have been only a few of them... AND, IN ADDITION, YOU CAN MAKE UP YOUR OWN!!!

TC – Gudrun

NB ~ Recurring themes: Mean Druids, thumb-sucking, magic fingers, shape-shifting, multiple wives, manly pride, and male rights :=P



. r — e — z .

Editors

Jami Mills

Friday Blaisdale

Art Director

Jami Mills

Distribution Manager

Stacey Rome

Writers

Gudrun Gausman

Art Blue

Stihly Augenblick

Hitomi Tamatzui

Jami Mills

Harry Bailey

Adrian Blair

Crap Mariner

Copy Editors
Friday Blaisdale
Jami Mills

Graphics Editor
Jami Mills

Photographer
Jami Mills

editors